

## VIEWS AND REVIEWS OF THE WEEK IN THE ART WORLD

## Work of Charles Sheeler Attracts Attention—Other Exhibitions.

By HENRY MCBRIDE.

THE work of Charles Sheeler now on view in the De Zayas Gallery is an exhibition for the progressive element in the community. Mr. Sheeler is an out and out modernist, and there is very little in the past history of art that will assist the amateur to appreciate him. Only the sophisticated amateurs who love exploring will go along with Mr. Sheeler, who will be forced to rely for sympathy, probably, upon his fellow modernists.

Mr. Sheeler's subjects are Bucks county barns, flowers and still lifes, and these have been worked out both in photography and water color. It is of course possible that the artist may win some applause from totally uninitiated persons, who will see that Mr. Sheeler's barns are genuine

Bucks county barns in spite of something in the work that the instructed will call "cubism," but these same uninitiated persons, while admitting that Mr. Sheeler's barns are barns, will doubtless sigh for a few more vulgar details, so that upon the whole their sympathy will not amount to much; and Mr. Sheeler's future as an artist will depend upon winning a few more converts among the instructed.

What will operate against a swift fame is a certain coolness in the work. Mr. Sheeler makes compositions that are as compact as Picasso's out of the various parts of a barn without destroying, as has been hinted, the barn resemblance; but his procedures are as fast and tight as Van Der Weyden's pictures of crucifixions and there is little plasticity in them to entice the nibbling picture-lover onward. In his art Mr. Sheeler is as ascetic as the early Dutch painters, but the Dutch painters flourished upon the fact that their asceticism was good form. They had the people and the patrons with them. Here in America asceticism is not good form. Not just at present, at least.

But all of Mr. Sheeler's fellow artists will see that he composes very well and that he contrives to make certain surfaces tell realistically, and without seeming to borrow too much from the famous innovator, Picasso.

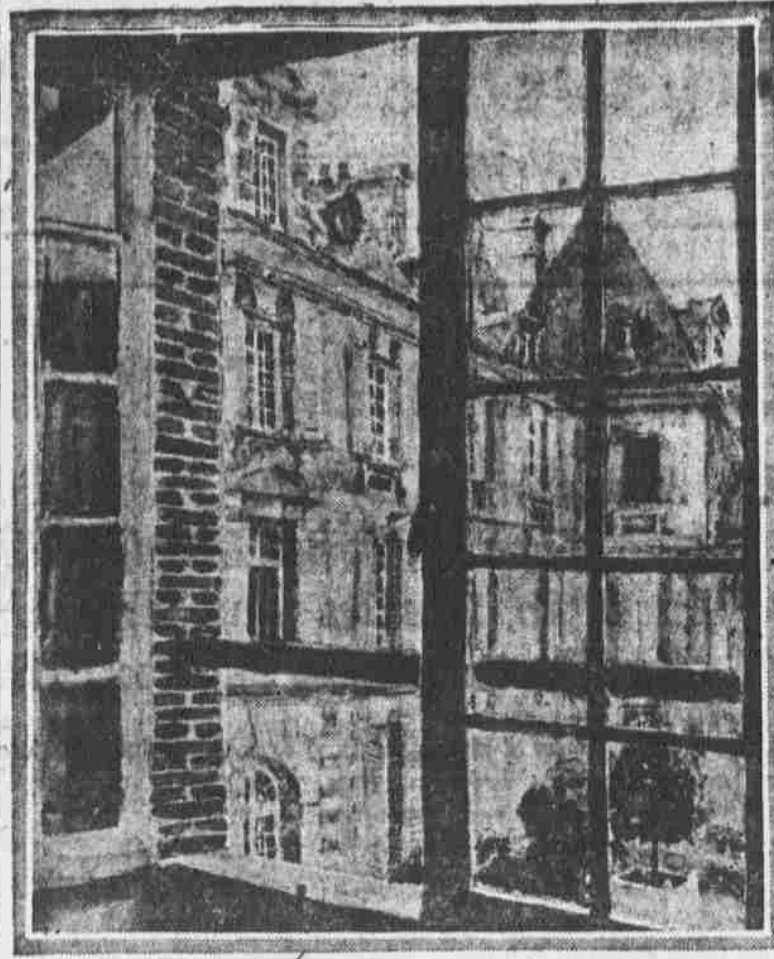
In the photographs Mr. Sheeler is more dominating. He has a relentless eye. It seems, when it comes to focusing; a personal feeling toward textures and use, and is even more Van Der Weydenish than ever in his compositions. All who look on photography as a means of expression should see these photographs of barns. They rank among the most interesting productions of the kind that have been seen here, and are all the more important as this artist never forgets for a moment that the camera is a machine, and he emphasizes the things a machine can do better than hands. Instead of blurring them into so-called artistic effects, as so many photographers do.

After saying that, it is apparent that I am scarcely the one to review sympathetically the new volume, "Pictorial Photography in America," which has just been published and which contains too large a proportion of foggy plates to please.

The volume is the first annual publication of the American Association for Pictorial Photography, an association that hopes to establish pictorial centers all over the country, where photographs may be seen that will lead to an exchange of views among workers. Meetings, lectures, libraries, touring exhibitions for museums—these are some of the plans for the society, which already conducts monthly meetings at the National Arts Club.

The publication of an annual is, of course, an excellent idea, and will lead to an interchange of opinions as well as anything that could be devised. The present volume contains 100 plates, carefully reproduced on plate paper, with figure and landscape subjects about evenly divided, and they have been contributed by photographers from all over the country.

Each photograph has points of excellence according to present day ideals of photography, but, as I said in beginning, I am one of the small minority



Watercolor by Walter Gay; on view at Gimpel &amp; Wildenstein's.

that does not accept much of the so-called artistic photography. To blur and smudge a plate and work over the printing until the product resembles painting that one has seen somewhere may be lots of fun, but I don't see how it can lead to the development of good photographs. I am even so old fashioned or bigotted that I think pictorial photography to this day have not improved upon the daguerotype, and the best photographs I ever saw were those shown some years ago in the Ehrlich Galleries, photographs that had been taken by Lewis Carroll (of Alice in Wonderland fame) and enlarged, I think, by Mr. Coburn. To be sure, Lewis Carroll had the advantage of some exceptionally good sitters, such as John Ruskin, Lord Tennyson, etc., but there was plenty of evidence in the photographs themselves that he did not do them in frolic, but went seriously after the qualities that a mechanical apparatus can get better than a man.

There is a marked tendency in all the art to make one medium appear another. Water colors are done to look like oils to look like water colors; etchings are frequently a yard in length, emblems look like paintings, marbles like porcelain, etc., and the worst of it is that sometimes genius compels one to forgive them for such violence, but on the whole the best artists respect their mediums.

## Etchings by Bernard.

Collectors who want one more either to collect may take up Albert Bernard, the French Academician, whose etchings have been recently brought over by E. Koppel & Co. and are being shown in their gallery; but after they acquire a full set and spread them out in the privacy of their libraries to compare them with their Rembrandts and Whistlers and Meryons, they will probably agree that comparisons are unwise.

M. Bernard, in fact, is stilted. One cannot pick up so many official honors nor so many official commissions as did M. Bernard and retain the artistic flexibility that is so useful to genius. In spite of oneself one becomes mannered. True, even an Academician in France can permit himself subjects that would bring an American into quick disgrace. In the series of "La Femme" the woman in the plate called "La Baigneuse" is flinging herself with most passionate vehemence into the arms of one lover, while lover No. 1 is scarcely out of sight in his motorboat. No American, of course, who allowed himself to be beguiled by such themes would stand much chance of ever being chosen director of the American Academy in Rome. M. Bernard is the director of the Roman French Academy in spite of or perhaps because of (for the two countries are so different) "La Baigneuse."

The series of episodes in the life of "La Femme" is ably enough handled. If the same subjects were carried out in oils as carefully, they would always be sure of acceptance at the salon. That quality of work invariably gains contemporary favor, but one would hesitate long before ranking the plays of Hervieu with Moliere or the etchings of Bernard with Rembrandt. The essential matter in the Bernard etchings is commonplace.

The sympathy with life is not unalloyed. M. Bernard, in fact, does not see a human being, he sees a model. "Le Dejeuner" made me squint not because of the intimacy of the scene, but because the domestic in the background was so fatuous. In every plate there was something to make one blush for M. Bernard's powers of interpreting life, true to form as a public man, did his best while being watched. The "Femme au Vase" is not the least of the etchings in his exhibition, whereas the Zorn sketch is very casual indeed. By way of all his casualness, Zorn gave a rather amusing and caricature study of the director of the French Academy at Rome. After looking at the Zorn portrait one understands the Bernard etchings perfectly.

## EXHIBITION OF Recent Paintings

by

Eugene V. Brewster

Until February 29

BABCOCK GALLERIES

19 East 49th Street

their striped blue mats and old gilt frames. Scattered about, often in great profusion, but always arranged with unerring taste, we see superb old Chinese porcelains, mounted frequently in carved and gilded bronze of the time of Louis XV., glorious red lacquer and lacquer of black and gold, spirited busts of marble or terra cotta, crystal chandeliers and candelabra, ornate clocks and many other objects of great beauty. The rendering of all these various materials is wholly admirable. In a word, in these paintings we have preserved the very essence of the art and the charm of the epoch, in which taste seemed to have been almost a matter of instinct.

The personalities of both the people who formerly and at present inhabit the charming old salons of French hotels and chateaux which Mr. Gay has so delightfully delineated are always suggested in a most subtle manner. It is not necessary for our enjoyment to get a glimpse of the occupants of these rooms, because we can feel their presence. Far are these apartments from being deserted. Some one has only this moment stepped into the adjoining chamber or out into the blaze of sunshine that comes in at a low French window. Regard that picture of a dining room closely and it will not be long before some people enter, intent upon their dejeuner. No, it were absurd to



"St. Christopher," one of the "Morgan" Durers in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

say that these rooms are deserted. As well say that certain marvellously proportioned salons in one of the royal chateaux are empty and bare because they are devoid of furniture and paintings and tapestries. As if a room with such proportions and such holdings could ever look unfurnished and bare!

## NOTES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE WORLD OF ART

In regard to a Renoir now on view at the Elder Gallery, London, Mr. Kennedy in the Observer makes the following observations:

"Mr. Dell tells us about his early struggles as a champion of Impressionism, about his various 'periods,' and about his final style, which is generally held to be the glorious culmination of his artistic development. A few critics and appreciators, Mr. Dell remains from giving the real reason of the vaporous looseness of Renoir's later work, and leads one to attribute to deliberate intention what was really the inevitable result of physical incapacity, of suffering borne with heroic courage."

The fact is that for many years before his death Renoir was paralyzed and practically unable to hold his brush, which—so I am told by one who knew him well—had to be tied to his hand. Yet this truly great artist continued to work with indefatigable energy and to produce works that are the delight of connoisseurs. No wonder that in his later period the research of technical precision is entirely abandoned, and the means are completely subordinated to the end, namely, the representation of contour and differentiation of textures. Relief and volume are given by means of light—not the light of Nature playing on the forms, but an arbitrary light emanating, as it were, from the forms which for the purposes of pictorial organization have to be thrown into relief.

This innovation is Renoir's great contribution to the development of modern art. It entitles him to an exalted position among his contemporaries, but does not justify the exalting as "masterpieces" of the many banal and shaky fancy heads and figures of pretty women produced by him in his declining

years, along with others that merit the highest praise. The "Nude" at the Elder Gallery is certainly one of his supreme achievements. I doubt if any other painter ever rivalled Renoir in the painting of living palpitating flesh and if a better example could be found than this full-bodied figure standing to her knees in shallow water, the movement of which forms concentric circles around her. Her attitude is that of the Medici Venus. Like Manet, Renoir was asleep in the great art of the past, but his borrowings are entirely legitimate, for he never failed to revitalize the traditional forms, in the same way as Manet, in his "Olympia"—a picture that appeared to be ultra-modern at the time when it was painted—merely gave a modern version of the reclining Venus of Giorgione and Titian, or in his "Dejeuner sur l'herbe," an up to date paraphrase of a mythological scene engraved by Marcantonio after a Raphael design.

## Mr. Elisabeth Sawe Wood.

By Henry McBride.

DEAR FELLOW CITIZEN: In the self-preface of Mr. Hiddle, which you quoted in yesterday's Sunday Art page, is one sentence which somewhat amused me, namely, "It is the problem of modern artists . . . to translate a Titian into terms of Monet or Cézanne."

Now this is the ominous rock upon which all modernists are wrecked. In these days the artists talk and jabber too much; instead let them saw wood. The old masters knew everything we know and a goodly lot besides. To prove this by one instance only: I saw Cézanne's copy of an old master three years ago at a memorial exhibit on Fifth Avenue. I noticed that he could not do it. Color, drawing, action, etc., were miles behind the proficient qualities of the original. As to Monet, he never equalled some of Cyp's beau plain air effects; never produced anything really difficult to portrait as Cyp had; detail, perfectly drawn, and fowl; and detail no modernist would have the courage and patience to draw. The modernists do not take sufficient time to really finish their work. I candidly think the reason is that they do not know how. Study a Lancelotti, a Humboldt, Robert, for short. They are good examples; their effects are perfect, their drawing has no following among the impressionists.

If the impressionists care to be immortal let them try to emulate the old masters, forgetting that the modern day exists. Be as wonderful as Titian, Veronese, etc. Let Cézanne and Monet alone, they were no geniuses. A genius means an artist who creates subjects grand and new. The impressionists have given us only transcripts of commonplace nature, not only stupendous thoughts, as had the old giants.

If our young artists would only saw wood and not talk in terms of technique, but in terms of high art, then there is hope for our art.

LOUIS M. EISENHART, One Who Saw Wood. New York City, Feb. 10.

## Durer Prints at Metropolitan.

Those in search of art education can do no better than a visit to the exhibition of Durer prints at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. One cannot know a

pick out any particular ones for special mention on the score of their quality.

"In this exhibition there will be shown in numerous cases several impressions of the same plate, for the purpose of enabling the visitor to the galleries not only to make comparisons of quality but of many interesting variations in state and issue."

"Among these last may more especially be mentioned the first and second states of the Holy Family in dry print; three impressions of the Great Fortune, a first state, a second state with burr under each of the bridge supports, and another without burr; the first and second completed states of the Adam and Eve; three impressions of the finished state of the effects of Jealousy, showing undescribed variations in the work; two impressions of the portrait of Pirckheimer, before and after the retouching; two Coats of Arms with the Cock, before and after the rectification of the boundary line; two Little Fortunes, one as early that on it can distinctly be seen the scratch lines by which Dürer had indicated a space under the figure before finally determining to make it stand on a ball; two Prigonal Sona, one having a burr in the foliage of the trees, and two Promenades, in one of which the grass in the left foreground is very rich in burr."

## Charles Shannon's Drawings.

There is an exhibition of Charles Shannon's drawings in the Colnaghi Galleries, London, and Mr. Rutter's comment upon them in the London Sunday Times is as follows:

"Charles Shannon is one of those exceptional artists whose work has not been influenced in any baneful way by his election as an Associate of the Royal Academy. His work remains now, as before his election, something aloof from the struggle for recognition, reserved, romantic—but very quietly and soberly romantic—sweet but not cloying in color, and always dignified and gracious in its rendering of form."

"The essential qualities of Mr. Shannon's art are pleasurably manifest in the exhibition of his original drawings and studies now on view at Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi's galleries. While by no means deficient in power, there is an extraordinary gentleness in his drawings, and it is in this respect that he differs widely from some of the younger draftsmen of our day. In the work of these last, the essential quality, the tactile value, is apt to have the character of a slap or a punch; with Charles Shannon it is always a caress, and this firm but gentle handling of form is perhaps one of the most salient distinctions between the chivalry of romantic painting and the truculence of modern realism."

There have been some changes among the pictures at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Among the paintings recently hung in the galleries of paintings are the portraits of Edward L. Bacon and Mrs. Walter Rathbone Bacon, the former the bequest, the latter the gift, of Mrs. Virginia Purdy Bacon, which are now placed in Gallery 13; the "Crucifixion," by Pesellino, acquired by purchase, to be found in Gallery 30, and three American paintings, lent by Edward W. Root—"The Refractory Season," by Arthur B. Davies; "The Pawnbroker's Daughter," by George B. Luks, and "The Park," by Maurice B. Prendergast—all hung in Gallery 20.

## Miss Loew's Engagement

Continued from First Page.

bury, L. I., and Newport; a great-grandson of Edwin Dennison Morgan, civil war Governor of New York, and a descendant of James Morgan who founded the Morgan family in this country in 1668.

At the wedding Mrs. Charles Cary Rumsey and Mrs. James Cameron Clark were matrons of honor. The bridesmaids were the Misses Margaret Chanler Emmet and Hester Alida Emmet, sisters of the bride, and Misses Gabrielle Emmet and Rosamond Sherwood, cousins. Little Jane Erin Emmet, sister of the bride, and Elizabeth Jay, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. De Lancey Kane Jay and a niece of the bridegroom, were flower girls. Master Thomas Archer Morgan was his brother's best man and the ushers were Mr. Jasper Morgan, another brother; Messrs. C. Temple Emmet, Jr.; Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, Jr.; Douglas Monroe Robinson, Darragh A. Park, Henry Hilt, Jr.; T. H. Frothingham, Upton S. Sullivan, Daniel Sargent, Jeremiah M. Bayard Warren, J. S. Parker, Jr.; R. S. Potter and George C. Cutler, Jr. The Rev. Dr. Leighton Parks performed the ceremony, which was followed by a reception at the home of the bride's aunt, Miss Lydia Field Emmet, 585 Park avenue.

Mrs. H. Newell Reynolds of 565 Park avenue last week announced the engagement of her daughter, Miss Martha Barne Reynolds, to Mr. William Knight, Jr., of 45 East Fifty-fourth street. Miss Reynolds was graduated from the Spence School and is a member of the Junior League. During the war she was an active worker in the Red Cross and the National League of Women's Service. Mr. Knight left Yale at the beginning of the war and served with the Yale unit in France as an ambulance driver eight months. He later became a Lieutenant in the United States Air Service.

From Boston, Mass., came the announcement last week of the engagement of Miss Pauline Pumphrey Smyth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lloyd Smyth, to Mr. Arnold Fraser-Campbell of this city. Miss Smyth is a member of the Sewing Circle of 1918. Mr. Fraser-Campbell is a son of Mr. Evan J. Fraser-Campbell of New York and Dunmore Tarbert, Loch Fyne, Scotland. He was graduated from Harvard in 1908.

One of last week's brides was Mrs. Frederick E. Barbour, who was Miss Helen A. Carriere, and is the daughter of Mrs. L. Sidney Carriere of 187 East Seventy-third street. Mr. Barbour is a son of Mrs. William Barbour of this city. After a honeymoon in the South he and his bride will live at 11 West Fifty-third street.

## A PUBLIC EXHIBITION

is now being held in the new Galleries of

TON-YING &amp; CO.

665 FIFTH AVENUE

Corner 53rd Street, Second Floor

It includes a large collection of Chinese Jades, Porcelains, Potteries, Paintings, Bronzes, and a number of rare stone carvings.

## EXHIBITION

of

XVIII CENTURY

FRENCH

ENGRAVINGS

At the Galleries of

M. Knoedler &amp; Co.

556 Fifth Avenue